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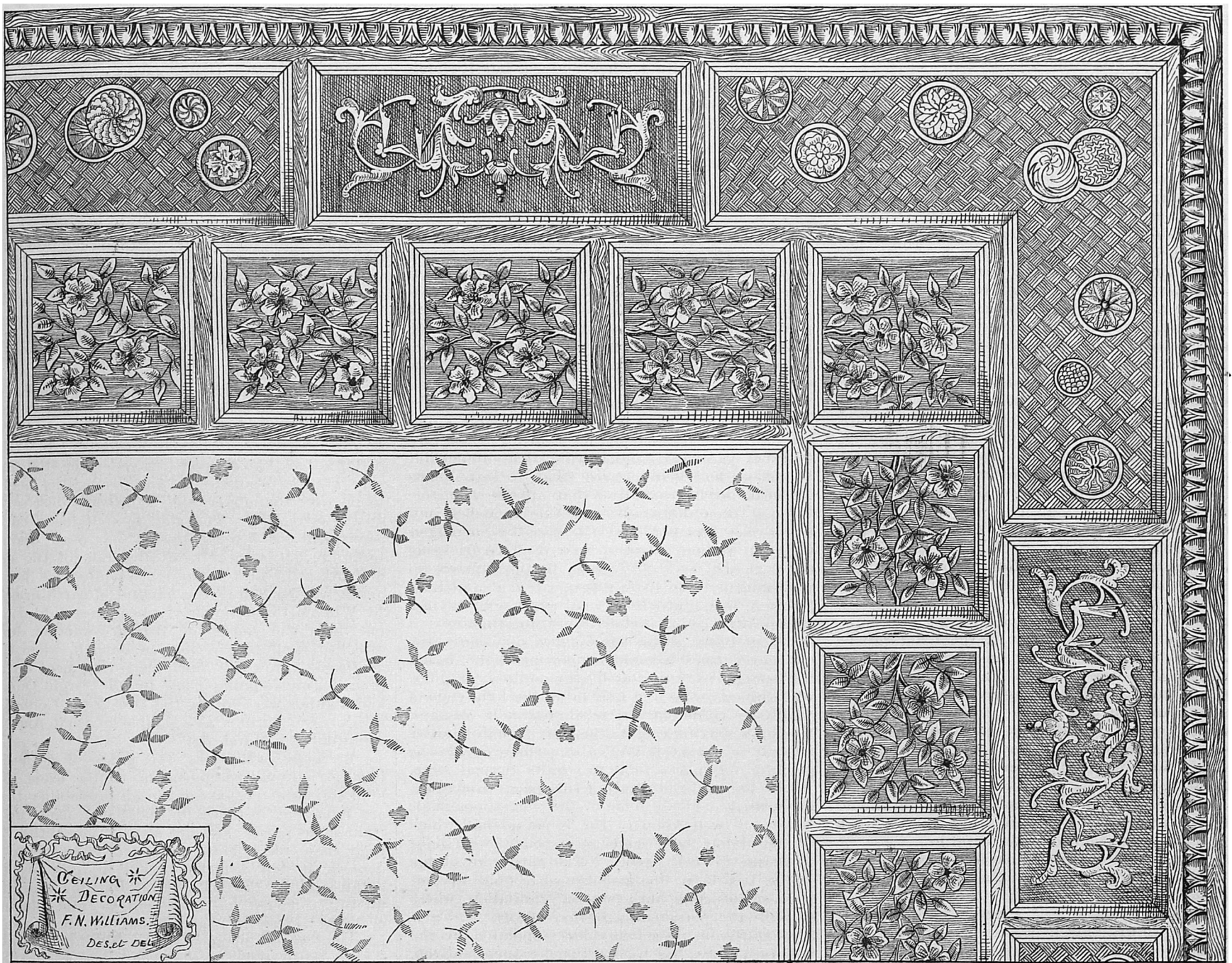
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The wood work of the ceiling is of cherry. In the outer panels the basket-work is covered with gold bronze, while the alternate ones are a deep red with scrolls in gold, shaded with green bronze. The wheels in the panels of basket-work are stucco, bronzed with silver and green. The inner panels have a ground of dead gold, with flowers painted in deep reds and leaves in sage greens. The central portion of the ceiling has a ground of sage green; the leaves, which are scattered over it, are a darker shade, and the flower-like figures a delicate pink. This scheme of colors is only one of the many combinations which could be used with good effect, and, of course, one has to be guided by the uses to which the room is to be put.

OUR PARIS LETTER.

Every year, in the month of August, the Society of the Central Union opens in Paris an exposition, solely devoted to the products of our interesting and increasing artistic French industries. This exhibition, and we may call it an important one, is followed with attention by all who take an interest in admiring the novelties and watching the progress of our decorative arts. It is held in the Palais de Champs Elysées shortly after the close of the annual *salon* of paintings; it is inaugurated with much display, and during the time it is open attracts a large number of visitors and strangers.

I should have been glad, in beginning this correspondence, to have given an account of this interesting artistic display, and it would be a pleasure to devote this entire letter to a subject so in harmony with the purposes of your journal, which proposes, I believe, to give so much space to furnishing and ornamentation.

I will return to the subject hereafter, and describe more fully the remarkable objects upon exhibition.

A rule of the Central Union provides that the different industries shall be distinct in various groups, and each year devoted to a particular group, last season, for example, industries in metal were shown, whilst this summer we have industries of wood, of furniture, and all in connection with it; nor must we forget wall paper, painted and felt paper, even curtains and hangings in this delicate material, with possibilities for other decorative uses.

Our country has kept many relics of antique furniture, and in exhibiting them, by the side of modern work, we feel it is calculated to give good ideas, and lead to desirable results, by thus studying the example of "yore," in close proximity to the attempts of to-day.

The industries of wood—that is, manufacture of art furniture—in the present case, I can assure you, are worthy of special notice, and they show many specimens which demand more than a passing glance. In fact, the exhibition of this year has proved that the art of furniture manufacturing retains its superiority in our country. There appears to be no decadence in our taste, and we still claim pre-eminence for fineness of execution and elegance of details. True, we have not entirely escaped the eclectic style of our times, but it does not appear to have interfered with our perfection in design.

Carved wood is represented by some excellent pieces, and sunken panels adorned with carvings are favorite forms of decoration for dining rooms and libraries, and are admirably adapted to large mansions and country seats.

Among the novelties displayed are some sets of lac furniture of handsome appearance, the Japanese character of decoration being closely followed. Pieces covered with Algerian tissues or elaborate woollen stuffs, intended originally, we think, for door curtains or carpets, are much sought after.

Our traditional art of marquetry and rose wood is by no means lost sight of, yet we would not have it understood that the French styles predominate to the exclusion of others, for the inlaying of the Italian Renaissance is represented by delicate models.

Those rooms devoted to the so-called retrospective exhibition, are especially interesting, showing the furniture of the various epochs, and particularly rich in the samples loaned by the State, taken from the drawing rooms of the Ministries or the Government store houses.

Several bed rooms have been restored, with State beds of gilded wood, carved in reliefs and crowns, and draped with golden bordered curtains. A bed *à la Dauphine* is noticeable, being in the purest Louis XVI. style, and another canopied over with feathers and highly ornamented. Pier tables in gilt are shown, many of them rich in

carving, and the most of them from the household of the First Napoleon. Some, indeed, were made for the Empress Josephine from drawings by the painter, Prudhon.

Rooms are devoted to the display of needle work, and to hangings in Beauvais and Gobelin style. Workwomen are engaged, and the actual labor of manufacturing is shown; threads are seen running and entwining, and the subject gradually assumes a shape upon the canvas.

Mr. Vanderbilt has recognized the skill of our decorative artists, and given several orders in Paris. Among other things, an elegant stained glass window is being made for his banquet hall, which we understand, has been named "The Hall of the Field of the Cloth of Gold." Naturally, he wished also a ceiling by Baudry, the elegant and powerful decorator of the Opera green-room, and the recipient of the highest honors at the *Salon* of 1881.

Delightful composition—this ceiling by Baudry. The subject, "The marriage of Psyche," is a mythological suggestion, but the interpretation is decidedly free. Cupid presses Psyche to his breast, the gods of Olympus are witnesses of the scene and form groups about the lovers. Mars caresses Venus, Proserpine fans Pluto, Juno and Jupiter dispute.

This ceiling is circular, the corners of the room being taken up by groups of Cupids bearing allegorical attributes.

In every detail the artist has displayed his high art, all is gracious, coquettish, and effective.

A ceiling should be the lightest of decorations, one should have in looking at it the illusion of an horizon opening to the sky. A painter, then, should not show too much bloom in his tones.

Baudry has used in his work very soft colors, a light rose, and dull, faded violet, a blue verging upon the gray, and thereby made the picture charming. It is made to delight the eyes, it is witty and ingenious, and it has already been said that this decorative work is calculated to nobly illustrate our French art to the United States.